

Vocabulary Instruction for Grades K-3 in the Common Core Era

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Where do we find vocabulary in the Common Core?

**We find the following on pages 25
and 51 of the CCSS document:**

**“Acquire and use accurately a range
of general academic and domain
specific words and phrases.”**

Vocabulary is an anchor standard.

Printed School English

- **88,500 word families, but perhaps
180,000 words if we consider idioms,
words with multiple meanings, etc.**
- **40,000 words known by the average
high school student**
- **5,000 most frequent words known by
the average third or fourth grader**

**See Graves et al., *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 67, No. 5,
February, 2014, pp. 333-346.**

**How many words are there
in several languages?**

English: about a million

Chinese: 500,000+ (various dialects)

Japanese: 232,000

Spanish: 225,000+

Russian: 195,000

Vocabulary & Common Core

Surprisingly, in the early grades (K-3):

- There is limited mention of vocabulary in the 10 standards. (See standard 4 in Literary/Informational Text for grades 1-3)
- In the Literacy Foundational Skills, high-frequency words and grade-appropriate irregularly-spelled words along with inflectional endings, prefixes, suffixes, and common Latin suffixes are included.

Vocabulary Foundational Skills in the Common Core

Reading: Phonics and Word Recognition

**K: Read common high-frequency words
by sight (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.K. 3c)**

- 1: Recognize and read grade-appropriate
irregularly spelled words (RF.1.3g)**
- 2: Recognize and read grade-appropriate
irregularly spelled words (RF.2.3f)**
- 3: Read grade-appropriate irregularly
spelled words (RF.3.3d)**

Help Students Master a Core of High-Frequency Words

**Remember: some, but not all, irregularly
spelled words can be regarded as high-
frequency words in the primary grades**

**Take a look at the next 2 pages of your
workshop notes for high-frequency
words to teach. These are the 300 most
frequently occurring words from over
6,000 texts used in schools and colleges.**

These 300 words are the most common words in printed English (Zeno, Ivens, Millard, & Duvvuri, 1995). The reason is clear: these high-frequency words are a critical, though not sufficient, component for efficient and effective literacy.

25 High-Frequency Words for Kindergarten*

the	in	for	are	at
of	is	you	they	or
and	that	he	with	from
to	it	on	be	had
a	was	as	his	I

100 High-Frequency Words for First Grade*

not	out	who	down	our
have	if	like	make	must
this	some	could	now	before
but	would	has	way	good
by	so	him	each	too
were	people	how	called	long
one	them	than	did	me
all	other	two	just	years
she	more	may	after	day
when	will	only	water	used
an	into	most	through	work
their	your	its	get	any
there	which	made	because	go
her	do	over	back	use
can	then	see	where	things
we	many	first	know	well
what	these	new	little	look
about	no	very	such	another
up	time	my	even	around
said	been	also	much	man

*From Jerry L. Johns and Susan Davis Lenski, *Improving Reading: Strategies, Resources, and Common Core Connections* (6th ed.). Copyright © 2014 Kendall Hunt Publishing Company (800-247-3458; ext. 6). May be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes.

3.5

175 High-Frequency Words for Second Grade*

great	again	need	number	days
same	important	high	far	animals
came	while	last	person	word
come	something	until	city	let
right	states	children	better	wanted
should	don't	along	white	across
small	why	took	side	American
old	large	together	family	early
think	want	sometimes	night	though
take	few	saw	didn't	four
still	school	enough	country	face
place	often	light	name	best
find	food	got	it's	became
off	under	example	ever	seen
different	always	words	form	himself
part	however	united	usually	sure
found	man	almost	hard	energy
us	air	father	knew	sun
world	asked	live	today	second
away	both	keep	times	feet
life	being	body	soon	really
three	does	end	told	certain
went	going	hand	several	turned
those	big	head	system	toward
own	without	read	state	parts
help	looked	others	upon	black
every	say	year	thing	ways
here	left	since	earth	show
house	began	against	money	means
might	mother	young	become	door
between	during	give	group	special
never	tell	set	government	course
home	land	kind	later	known
thought	next	room	living	move
put	once	eyes	change	yet

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TIPS FOR STRENGTHENING SIGHT VOCABULARY AND HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS

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More Holistic Approaches

1. Language Experience Stories
2. Pattern Books/Predictable Stories
3. Poems, Songs, and Rhymes
4. Class Stories/Morning Message
5. Wordless Picture Books
6. Read-Along Stories/Books
7. Listen First, Read Later
8. Repeated Readings
9. Sustained Silent Reading

More Direct Approaches

1. Compare words that are easily confused.
2. Chant the spelling of words.
3. Write the word from memory.
4. Read word lists as quickly as possible.
5. Read phrases.
6. Read sentences with the "moving" words.
7. Sort the words into categories (actions, colors, size, questions, numbers, time, sequence, etc.).
8. Locate selected high-frequency words in books, newspapers, and magazines.
9. Create "flexible" sentences from high-frequency word lists like the Revised Dolch List and the List of High-Frequency Nouns.

Note: These tips emphasize ideas for high-frequency words.

Vocabulary Foundational Skills in the Common Core

Reading: Phonics and Word Recognition

- 1: Read words with inflectional endings**
- 2: Decode words with common prefixes and suffixes**
- 3: Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and decode words with common Latin suffixes and derivational suffixes**

Vocabulary & Common Core

In the early grades (K-3):

- The Language section (Vocabulary Acquisition and Use) has the most mentions. What are the items included in this section?**
- Let's take a look at the next 2 pages in these workshop notes.**

Language Standards K-5

Kindergartners:

Grade 1 students:

Grade 2 students:

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>Kindergarten reading and content</i>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately (e.g., knowing <i>duck</i> is a bird and learning the verb <i>to duck</i>). Use the most frequently occurring inflections and affixes (e.g., -ed, -s, re-, un-, pre-, -ful, -less) as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word. | <p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 1 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Use frequently occurring affixes as a clue to the meaning of a word. Identify frequently occurring root words (e.g., <i>look</i>) and their inflectional forms (e.g., <i>looks, looked, looking</i>). | <p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 2 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., <i>happy/unhappy, tell/retell</i>). Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., <i>addition, additional</i>). Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., <i>birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark</i>). Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases. |
| <p>5. With guidance and support from adults, explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent. Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites (antonyms). Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are <i>colorful</i>). Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., <i>walk, march, strut, prance</i>) by acting out the meanings. | <p>5. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sort words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent. Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a <i>duck</i> is a bird that swims; a <i>tiger</i> is a large cat with stripes). Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are <i>cozy</i>). Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs differing in manner (e.g., <i>look, peek, glance, stare, glare, scowl</i>) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., <i>large, gigantic</i>) by defining or choosing them or by acting out the meanings. | <p>5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are <i>spicy</i> or <i>juicy</i>). Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., <i>toss, throw, hurl</i>) and closely related adjectives (e.g., <i>thin, slender, skinny, scrawny</i>). |
| <p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.</p> | <p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., <i>because</i>).</p> | <p>6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe (e.g., <i>When other kids are happy that makes me happy</i>).</p> |

Language Standards K-5

Grade 3 students:

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on *grade 3 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
 - a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., *agreeable/disagreeable*, *comfortable/uncomfortable*, *care/careless*, *heat/preheat*).
 - c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., *company*, *companion*).
 - d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
 - a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., *take steps*).
 - b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are *friendly* or *helpful*).
 - c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., *knew*, *believed*, *suspected*, *heard*, *wondered*).
6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., *After dinner that night we went looking for them*).

Grade 4 students:

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on *grade 4 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
 - a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *telegraph*, *photograph*, *autograph*).
 - c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
 - a. Explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors (e.g., *as pretty as a picture*) in context.
 - b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
 - c. Demonstrate understanding of words by relating them to their opposites (antonyms) and to words with similar but not identical meanings (synonyms).
6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., *quizzed*, *whined*, *stammered*) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., *wildlife*, *conservation*, and *endangered* when discussing animal preservation).

Grade 5 students:

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on *grade 5 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
 - a. Use context (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *photograph*, *photosynthesis*).
 - c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
 - a. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.
 - b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.
 - c. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.
6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., *however*, *although*, *nevertheless*, *similarly*, *moreover*, *in addition*).

Vocabulary & Common Core (Areas for Instruction)

- Prefixes like *un, re, dis* & *in/im/ir/il*
- Suffixes like *ed, s/es, ing, ly*
- Roots and inflected forms: *ed, ing, s/es*
- Compound words
- Sort words into categories
- Multiple meaning words (e.g., *run*)
- Shades of meaning among verbs and adjectives
- Real life connections between words

Vocabulary Principles Encompass Four Areas

1. Providing rich and varied language experiences
2. Teaching individual words
3. Teaching word-learning strategies
4. Fostering word consciousness

Based on Graves (2009).

Effective Vocabulary Instruction Includes

1. Providing a student-friendly definition of the word
2. Showing the word in context
3. Giving multiple exposures to the word
4. Giving students opportunities for discussion and active processing of the word's meaning
5. Helping students review the word in various contexts over time

Based on four literature reviews in Graves et al., *The Reading Teacher*, February, 2014

Jerry's Teaching Suggestions

1. Do your best to embed teaching in your existing curriculum and lessons
2. Read to students and discuss words of importance and future usefulness
3. Have fun with words
4. Encourage/promote wide reading
5. Use modeling, show-me, pictures, hands on, real-life examples, drawings by students

Affixes: A General Approach (prefixes, suffixes, roots, inflected forms)

- Use known/understood roots/bases initially
- Show how element changes the meaning and develop the meaning of the element
- Invite examples from students with the element being taught; demonstrate the meaning change (show me) when possible
- Be alert for other words with element in reading (teacher and student) and talking
- Collect/make words for a bulletin board

Teaching Example with *un*

- Possible roots: happy, lock, kind, zip button, pack, safe, kind, learn, clear, seal, steady, known, _____, _____
- Write happy on the board. Have students say the word. "Show me a happy face."
- Add *un* to happy. "What new word have we made? Yes, we have made unhappy. Show me how you look when you are unhappy." Help students understand that *un* means not.

Teaching Example with *un*

- "Would you be happy or unhappy if you got a present? When are you happy?"
- Invite more examples from students with the element being taught. Have them demonstrate the meaning change (show me) when possible.
- Be alert for other words with element in reading (teacher and student) and talking
- Encourage use of the *un* with other known words.

Information to Use With *er*

- Use an approach similar to the previous example
- Definition: *er* makes a new word that tells us what a person does
- Words: teach, farm, ranch, paint, sing, play, sell, perform, dance, hunt
- Other easy inflected forms to use with students in the early stages of reading: *s*, *es*, *ed*, *ing*. **These endings account for 65% of all suffixed words.**

Additional Ways to Promote Vocabulary Growth

- 1. Word Sorts (open and closed)**
- 2. Compound words**
- 3. Concept Circles**
- 4. Word Line: shades of meaning**
- 5. Mystery Word Bubbles**
- 6. Semantic Feature Analysis**

Classifying and Sorting Words General Plan

- Provide a list of words and categories
- Words: chair, library, nurse, rug, store, teacher, room
- Categories: Words that tell about
people places things
- Variation: Have students create their own categories from a list of words related to a topic or unit of study

Classifying and Sorting Words

- Tell students that some words go together because of what they mean (tag, beach, soccer, park, playground, hopscotch). Read the words on the board aloud and guide students to determine two categories for the words (*places to go*; *games to play*). Write the categories.
- Model how to sort one of the words: "I know tag is a game so I'll put it under Games to Play."

Classifying and Sorting Words

- "The next word is beach. Where should we write beach?"
- Continue the lesson until all the words have been sorted.
- Invite additional words from students.
- Other variations
"Which word does not go with others? Why?" (banana, desk, chair; child baby, mad; ten, the, six; eye, door, face, feet)

Adapted from *Vocabulary Workshop* (Level Red). New York: William H. Sailler, 2013.

Word Sort Categories for High-Frequency Words

**Use the high-frequency words on
pages 3-4 in the resource packet**

People	Action words
Places	Size words
Question words	Colors
Directions	Numbers

Compound Words

- **Use ideas from Compound Words lesson sheet on the next page and words on page 13**
- **Adapt the lesson to your students beginning with words students know (house, dog)**
- **Ultimately, help students see that the meaning of each smaller word may be retained in the compound word (bluebird), somewhat changed (softball), or have practically nothing to do with the meanings of the individual words (dragonfly).**

TEACHING COMPOUND WORDS

1. Tell students that a compound word is made up of two or more smaller words. Each of the words can stand alone, and together the words make a new word. For example, the word *bluebird* is made up of *blue* and *bird*. Together, the word means a specific type of bird.
2. Write the term, *compound word*, on the board. Ask students to try to think of compound words that they know.
3. Invite students to form small groups and brainstorm a list of compound words. Students could write their words on a sheet of paper. After a few minutes, invite a student from one group to share some of the words.
4. As the words are given, be sure they are written on the board. Then identify each word that makes up the compound word, have a student use the compound word in a sentence, and make sure students understand the word's meaning.
5. Note that the meaning of each smaller word can sometimes contribute to the meaning of a compound word. Invite students to model this process for some of their compound words or select from the list that follows.

doghouse	suppertime	cornbread	crossroads	homework
blueberry	notebook	blackbird	schoolwork	bedroom

6. Share some compound words whose separate meanings are unlikely to contribute to an accurate meaning for the compound word. Model for students by saying something like what follows.

I can see that two small words, goose and berry make the word gooseberry. I know a berry is something that could be eaten, but some berries are not edible and others are poisonous. A goose is an animal that is bigger than a duck. What I don't know is whether a gooseberry looks a bit like a goose. That meaning just doesn't make sense to me. I'm pretty sure this is some type of berry, but I don't know much more. I'd better consult my dictionary. [Look up the word and share the meaning: a spring shrub having greenish flowers and edible greenish berries.] Then say: I was right about gooseberry being a type of berry that can be eaten, but it does not look like a goose. I also found out the color of the berries.

7. Present some compound words in sentences. Have students underline the compound words and draw a line between the two words. If the meaning of the word is not known, have students consult their dictionaries. Then discuss the meanings of the compound words. Some sample sentences are provided below.
 - He brought homemade cookies to the lunchroom.
 - My grandparents gave me a notebook.
 - The radio broadcast was about a breakthrough in medicine.
 - The artwork and paintbrushes were in the workroom.
 - The blueberry plants were invaded by birds.
8. Conclude the lesson by encouraging students to use their knowledge of compound words when they come across longer words in their reading. This knowledge can be used to help separate the word into pronounceable chunks and possibly help with the word's meaning. Remind students that a dictionary can also be used if the meaning is not clear or if additional clarification is desired.
9. A list of Compound Words follows.

Compound Words

afternoon	deadline	highway	rattlesnake
airplane	doghouse	homesick	rollerblade
anybody	downhill	horseshoe	rowboat
anyone	downtown	jellybean	sailboat
applesauce	downstairs	jellyfish	sandpaper
backbone	dragonfly	keyboard	skyscraper
backseat	driveway	mailbox	snowball
barefoot	drugstore	mailman	snowflake
barnyard	earthquake	maybe	sometimes
baseball	everyone	motorcycle	starfish
basketball	everything	necktie	strawberry
bathtub	eyebrows	neighborhood	sunrise
bedroom	farmland	newspaper	sunset
beehive	firecracker	notebook	sunshine
billboard	firefly	oatmeal	teenager
birthday	firehouse	outlaw	thunderstorm
birthplace	fireplace	outside	toothbrush
bookcase	fishhook	overboard	underline
bookmark	flashlight	pancake	uphill
campfire	football	peanut	volleyball
chalkboard	fullback	pinball	waterfall
checkerboard	goldfish	playground	watermelon
classroom	grandmother	playhouse	whirlpool
cookbook	grasshopper	quarterback	wildlife
copyright	hallway	quicksand	without
cowboy	headlight	railroad	wristband
cupcake	headset	rainbow	wristwatch
daydream	highchair	raincoat	



Concept Circles - 3 Types

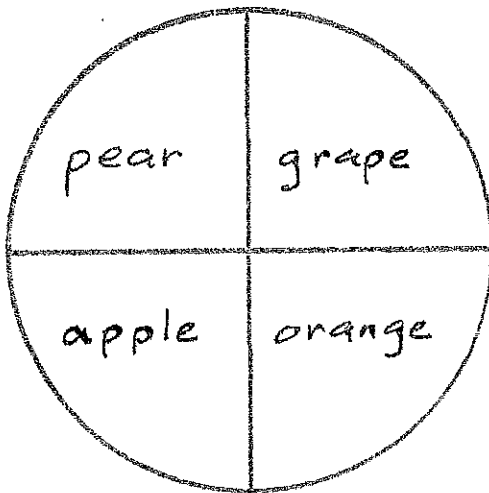
Variation: Divide circles into thirds

(topic)

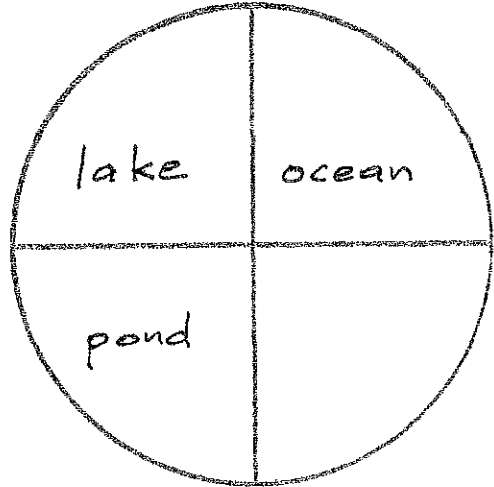
DIRECTIONS

1. Read the words in each circle.
2. Think of a word or phrase that tells how they are all alike.
3. Write that word or phrase on the line above the circle.

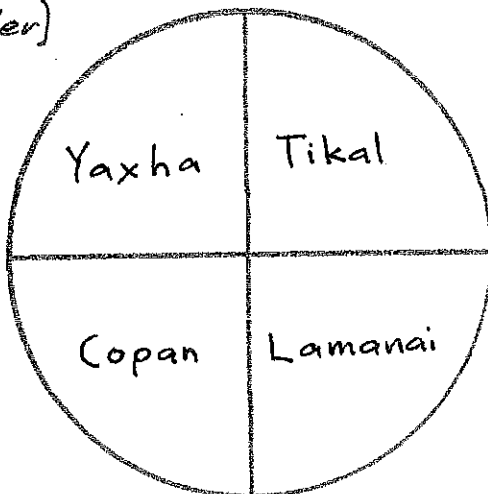
Type
#1



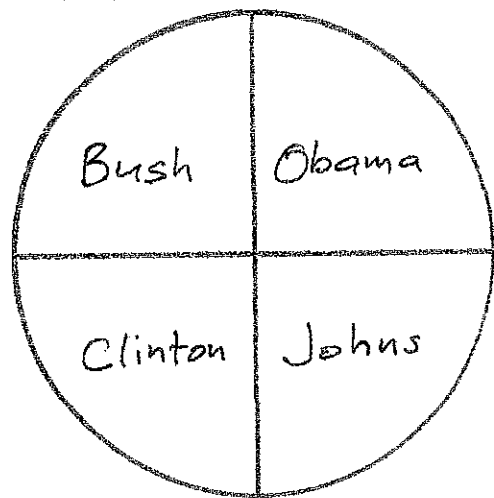
Type
#2



Type
#1
(harder)



Type
#3



Based on Vacca, R. T., & Vacca, J. L. (2002). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum* (7th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Jerry L. Johns, Susan Davis Lenski, and Roberta L. Berglund. *Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies for the Elementary Grades* (2nd ed.). Copyright © 2006 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company (1-800-247-3458, ext. 4). May be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes within the guidelines noted on the copyright page.

Name _____

Date _____



Word Line (Semantic Gradient)

DIRECTIONS Think about how the words below are related. Place them where you think they best fit on the line.

cool

hot

torrid

lukewarm

freezing

warm

boiling

scalding

chilled

frigid

Coldest

Hottest

Additional words for shades of meaning

- look, peek, glance, stare, scowl
- large, big, gigantic
- cool, cold, icy
- nibble, gobble, eat
- mad, angry, furious
- toss, throw, hurl
- bitter, bland, spicy
- capture, trap, snatch

Mystery Word Bubbles

⇒ DIRECTIONS

Solve the following word mysteries.

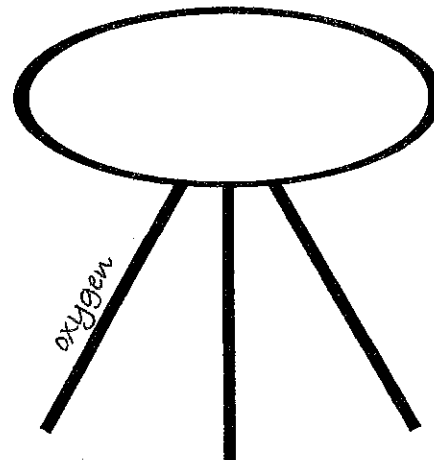
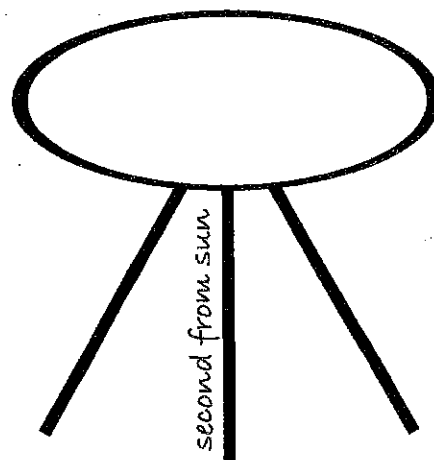
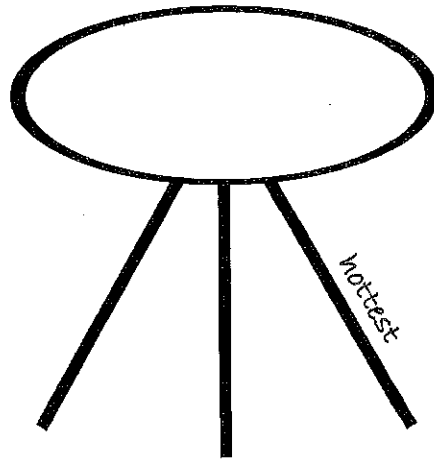
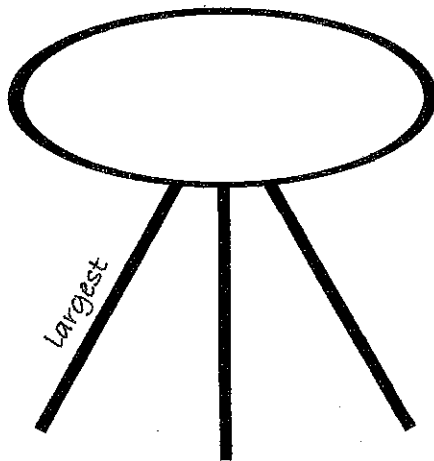
Planets

Topic

Word Clues

- largest planet
- Earth
- has water
- red spot
- second planet from sun
- oxygen
- Mercury
- closest to the sun
- hottest planet
- Jupiter
- Earth's twin
- living things
- made of gas
- Venus
- smallest
- bright

Mystery Word Bubbles



How to Solve Mystery Word Bubbles

Can you be a word detective and use the clues to solve the word mysteries?

1. Look at the word or phrase on the line below one of the bubbles.
2. Now look at the list of words. What big idea does the clue word below the bubble make you think of?
3. When you think you know the bubble word, write that word inside the bubble.
4. Now look at the word list again. Are there other words that go with the one you have written inside the bubble?
5. Write those words on the lines below the bubble. You have solved one of the mysteries!
6. Now see if you can solve the remaining word mysteries.



SEMANTIC FEATURE ANALYSIS

Feature Analysis (Pittelman, Heimlich, Berglund, & French, 1991) helps students realize that several words may have certain features in common. It also helps them learn the distinguishing concepts behind different words.

1. Select a general category and list some words within the category. One example is the term *transportation*. Of that general category, car, bicycle, and airplane are all examples of modes of transportation.
2. List some features common to each word and one or more unique features for each word. For transportation, some of the features include two wheels, wings, uses fuel, has an engine, and carries passengers. You may suggest a feature or two and ask the students to think of other features. Students may not be able to think of features unless the teacher first provides some examples.
3. Ask students to determine which features fit with which words. Have them make an x for features that fit and a — if the features don't describe the word. The following is an example for the category *transportation*.

Transportation	two wheels	wings	uses fuel	engine	passengers
car	—	—	x	x	x
bicycle	x	—	—	—	x
airplane	—	x	x	x	x

4. Ask students to explain their rationale for each word. Then ask students how the terms are similar and how they are different.
5. Another way to introduce Feature Analysis is to ask students to use their own names as words to describe. For features, they might use such ideas as "has a brother," "owns a pet," or "has freckles." Students can have fun using Feature Analysis and can get to know each other as well. A blank Feature Analysis Chart is on the following page.

WORDS	FEATURES	can be pets	scales	gills	wings	hair or fur	lungs	metamorphosis
amphibians								
reptiles								

Effective Vocabulary Instruction: A Personal Checklist

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The following non-inclusive checklist may be used to help you evaluate and strengthen classroom vocabulary instruction. Use a plus (+) for those items you do; use a question mark (?) for items you want to think about more; use a check (✓) for items you want to strengthen or that require further development. Not all items are appropriate for each grade.

The Classroom Environment

1. Classroom library that shows evidence of frequent use
 - A wide range of reading materials and difficulty levels
2. Dynamic, not static Word Walls
 - High-frequency words in primary grades and content area word walls in the upper grades
3. Labeled objects and pictures appropriate for the grade; helpful charts and posters related to vocabulary at all grades
4. Dictionaries and other word resources appropriate for the grade

Intentional Vocabulary Instruction

1. Students are taught high-frequency words in the primary grades
2. Students are read to daily with emphasis on important, select vocabulary words coupled with student-friendly definitions and rich discussions that encourage student use and links to their personal experience
3. Evidence of "important" words being taught effectively in lessons and content areas with emphasis on multiple exposures and a goal of mastery, highlighting relationships among and between words
4. Word-learning strategies are taught systematically and over time as appropriate to grade level; modeling and examples are integral aspects of lessons with ample opportunities to help students "own" the words
 - Various uses of context clues
 - Synonyms
 - Antonyms
 - Homonyms
 - Structural analysis (prefixes, suffixes, roots, inflected endings, compound words, contractions, etc.)
 - Figurative language
 - Greek and Latin roots
 - Denotation and connotation are compared and contrasted
 - Etymology

- Use of semantic mapping, semantic feature analysis, Venn diagrams, and graphic organizers are used to show and develop relationships between and among words
 - Dictionary, glossary, and other word resources
5. Students actively participate and share how learned strategies helped or did not help in particular instances
 6. Reinforce and encourage word learning and use in conversation

Extending and Expanding Vocabulary Learning

1. Promote reading various types of literature and diverse media as competence develops to help with vocabulary growth and to strengthen background knowledge
2. Encourage curiosity about words, use powerful words in teaching, and invite students to ask about words they don't know
3. Provide word games, puzzles, jokes, plays on words, and riddles along with appropriate computer games
4. Challenge students with unique and interesting words
5. Use words learned in speaking and writing; encourage students to do the same
6. Encourage students to share interesting words
7. Teach new meanings for known words

Red Flags

1. Mentioning words instead of actually teaching the words with ample experiences, student engagement, and repetitions
2. Presenting too many words at once
3. Failing to actively engage students in the learning process and relating the words to their experiences
4. Memorizing words and definitions; using word searches
5. Looking up words and writing a definition
6. Assuming that textbook authors know which words students should be taught
7. Failure to recognize that not all words should be taught to the same level of mastery
8. Ignoring the importance of repetition
9. Using instructional materials that are the same for all students: some students will be frustrated, others will be fine, and still others will find the materials too easy.

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